Population - 1937

Alabama.

Anniston, Ala. Sta
September 23, 1937

Alabama is not overpopulated, Dr. Hawk assures us, despite the fact that there are some low income groups in the state. With its resources fully developed and utilized, the state can support a much larger population at a higher living level, he says, for there is no shortage of natural wealth. For example, only four states, North Carolina, New York, Washington and California, have more water power developments than Alabama. Our state also is the iron center of the South and has coal; limestone, timber and other resources in abundance, besides a highly productive soil in some sections.

Another interesting point made by Dr. Hawk is that while 35 per cent of the total population of Alabama is colored, "there is no 'Negro problem as envisaged by agitators," for "the two races live peacefully side by side." The only real problem in relation to the colored race in Alabama, he believes, is that of increasing the earning power of the Negro and teaching him to manage his own affairs.

Regarding the foreign-born population of Alabama, it is stated that there are only about 15,000 white persons in the state who are not natives of this country. Most of these have come from Northern and Central Europe, although other races are represented. Included among those of foreign birth are about 2,000 Italians, 1,000 Russians, 900 Greeks, 70 Mexicans, 50 Chinese and 25 Japanese. There also are about 500 American Indians in the state. Alabama has no "foreign quarters" or any distinctly foreign communities anywhere and is, therefore, free from the problems that frequently characterize such settlements in some American cities.

Of the total population 10 years of age and ove in Alabama, however, 250,000 are illiterate, th percentage of illiteracy in the state being thre times that of the nation as a whole. But the col ored population accounts for the greater part o the illiteracy, only 60,000 white persons being in cluded in the total. And despite the high rate o the present time, there has been a considerabl improvement over conditions in Alabama two dec ades ago. Therefore, Dr. Hawk makes the predic tion that if the same progress continues, Alabama should be down to the national percentage for white people within the next decade and for all classes of population in two decades.

The other side of the picture, Dr. Hawk finds, is represented in the number of leaders and persons of prominence being produced by Alabama. But he notes that the migration of capable men and women from Alabama has resulted in serious loss in leadership and it should be added that the progress of the state is being retarded because of that situation. In recent years, according to Dr. Hawk, the migration has slowed down, but there continues to be a net loss, with those leaving outnumbering the persons of ability moving into the state.

Birmingham, Ala. Age-Herald
November 17, 1937

POPULATION STUDY ON

Data Concerning White And Negro Populations Sought In Survey

For the purpose of ascertaining difference in population between white persons and Negroes of Birmingham, research is under way at Birmingham-Southern College, under direction of Dr. William Lester Leap, sociology professor.

The research, done by students working under the National Youth Administration, will be concluded when a large map of the city has been made. The work was begun in September.

Population - 1937

General.

U.S. CENSUS ERRORS TOLD AT CONGRESS

Times

Dr. T. L. Smith at Population Parley in Paris Says Data on Negroes Are Confused

7-31-37

LONGEVITY IS DISCUSSED

New York

Prof. P. K. Whelpton Sees Trend in Fewer Children in First Five Grades of Schools

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PARIS, July 30.—An assertion that United States census-takers erroneously report a considerable number of young Negro males as females in the decennial censuses was made here today at the Population Congress by Dr. T. Lynn Smith of Baton Rouge, La.

Dr. Smith said that at least 3 per cent of Negro children of less than 1 year old were erroneously classified according to sex. Among other age groups, he said, there were similar errors, but the percentage was more difficult to estimate.

The causes for the errors were the low educational and social status of the colored people and carelessness in gathering original data about them, Dr. Smith said. Hence, he added, the tables on mortality according to age and sex for the entire United States were inexact.

Other American Speakers

Seven other scientists from the United States read papers, among whom was Pascal K. Whelpton, chairman of the American delegation and Professor of Economics at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. Professor Whelpton spoke on a method for estimating total United States births, including those unrecorded, by taking birth figures according to the race, nativity and age of mothers for the period from 1918 to 1921 and from 1929 to 1931.

Dr. Alfred J. Lotka of New York discussed recent results in population analysis. Other American papers read today were on the amount of ill health in rural and urban communities, by Harold F. Dorn of Washington, D. C.; on the longevity of native and foreign-born Americans, by Dr. Louis Dublin of New York, showing lower mortality from 1900 to 1930 among foreign-born of ages from 10 years up; internal migration and economic opportunity in the United States, by Carter Goodrich, United States Commissioner of the International Labor Office in Geneva; research on rural migration in the United States, by Charles E. Lively of Ohio State University, and on length of life in the early Roman Empire, by Walter F. Wilcoxx of Ithaca, N. Y.

Professor Whepton said to your correspondent:

"This is a congress for the scientific study of population problems. Hence we are not advocating either an increase or a decrease in the birthrate but are just giving plain statements of hard scientific facts.

"United States population experts seem to agree that the United States will reach the climax of its population in the next generation. Perhaps the top figure will be 150,000,000. After that the population is bound to decrease. That it is already shrinking is evidenced by the fact that there are fewer children today in the first five grades of the public schools.

"The United States population has increased only 9,000,000 from 1930, owing to the practice of birth control and lessened immigration. Most of us agree it is a good thing, leading to a higher standard of living."

Contrast In Longevity

A statistical study on the longevity of the native born and the foreign born in the United States shows, Dr. Louis I. Dublin reported, according to a copy of his paper made available here, that in the rural districts the native born males have an advantage of about three years in average length of life over the foreign born males. On the other hand, the study shows that foreign born in cities have just about the same average length of life as the urban native born.

Dr. Dublin also referred to an earlier study made by him, which showed, he asserted, that native children of foreign parentage had a mortality rate very much like that of their foreign parents, rather than like that of the native born of native parentage.

Among the less technical results in Dr. Alfred J. Lotka's paper was what he described as a "statistical curiosity"—namely, that "the probability of having two sons is equal to the probability of having two children."

"This seems rather paradoxical," Dr. Lotka's paper said, "but on reflection it will be seen that there are only four possibilities of a family of two children, whereas there are many more possibilities of families comprising two sons.

"For, two children may come in any of the following orders: two sons; first one son, then one daughter, then one son; two daughters. On the other hand, two sons may

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CARELESSNESS WITH COLORED DATA VOIDS CENSUS FIGURES

Negro

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7-31-37

Baltimore Md

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"At least three per cent of colored children less than one year old are erroneously classified according to sex," he declared. He also said that there are similar errors in other age groups, but that the percentage is more difficult to estimate.

Shreveport, La., Times
July 28, 1937

TIDES BENEATH THE SURFACE.

While spectacular phenomena like strikes fill the headlines, non-spectacular forces are quietly at work which may well affect the national welfare much more profoundly. Three of these non-spectacular but potent forces are the restriction of immigration, the decline in the death rate, the decline in the birth rate.

The result will be to make the United of the future a nation of older people, more of them born and reared in this country, than the United States of the present.

Another of these forces which do not make the headlines is the steady increase in material wellbeing, from decade to decade, for the nation as a whole. Another is the shift in occupations from one generation to another. In both cases the effect again will be seen upon the composition of the population.

The November, 1936, issue of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science is devoted to population problems. One article estimates that in 1928 the net reproduction rate for families in agriculture was about 1.30; for unskilled laborers, about 1.20; for professional people, about 0.75.

Studies made in Columbus, Ohio, Syracuse, N. Y., and Brooklyn, New York City, showed that in native white groups where the husband was in business, the number of children born was greater where the father had a common school education, or less, than where he had entered high school or college.

Studies made in Pittsburgh, Syracuse, Baltimore, Detroit and Cleveland (husband and wife both native whites and wife under 45) showed that the number of children born per 100 wives was almost 300 when the family income was under $1,200, around 265 when the income was from $1,200 to $2,000, only around 230 when the income was over $2,000. The authors warn, however, that fertility was influenced by certain factors in addition to economic status.

whites it was about two-thirds higher in the Rocky Mountain states than in the Middle Atlantic states. The negro rate was almost 50 per cent higher in the South Atlantic than in the East North Central states.

The number of white children up to 4 years of age in relation to the number of white women aged 20-44; the number of negro children was 43 per cent less than in 1850 in relation to the number of negro women aged 20-44; the number of negro children 49 per cent less in relation to the number of negro women.

The depression temporarily interrupted some population trends. The birth rate for white families in New York City declined sharply from 1930 through 1933. Then it went up through 1935 for families which paid $60 or more rent a month. For families where the median rent was from $45 to $60, the birth rate still declined after 1933, but much less sharply. For families paying $45 or less, the birth rate kept declining sharply through 1934, but much less sharply in 1935.

Slowly, but inexorably, the nature of the country's population changes. New customs leave their imprint. Americans of today differ from the Americans of a century ago. And other century new traits will be evident.

The problem is to perpetuate the American spirit, and to preserve the character-values brought to these shores by rugged pioneers. It is no easy task. But it is a task which must be done.

Geographical shifts in the population will also affect its future composition. From 1929 through 1931, the birth rate for native whites was almost 50 per cent lower on the Pacific Coast than in the East South Central states. For foreign-

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7-31-37 Baltimore Sunday

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THE SOUTH TODAY

The South: Population Seed Bed of the Nation

By RUPERT B. VANCE

(Copyright, 1937, by Southern Newspaper Syndicate)

Editor's Notre—Rupert B. Vance is professor of special science at the University of North Carolina and president of the Southern Sociological Society. Some of the facts, but not the interpreation of this release, are drawn from a forthcoming study of the national resources board, in which the author colaborted. This volume, The American People: Problems of a Changing Population, was done under the direction of Frank Lorimer, secretary of the Population Association of America.

There is no longer any doubt, the population experts tell us, that population growth in the United States will stop about 1960, and that we shall then enter on a period of declining population. This prediction, in simple language, is based on two prospects; first, that our present trends of births and deaths will continue, and second, that the population will grow older.

There is no doubt of the population's growing older, for falling birth rates, the stopping of immigration, and increased longevity mean that our people in the prime of life will grow older without the customary number of young people to succeed them. This fact, by the way, indicates the importance of the present interest in old-age pensions and benefits For example, those 65 and older made up 4.1 per cent of the population in 1900, and 5.4 per cent in 1930. Counting on no increase in length of life or any further decrease in births, they will furnish 10.1 per cent of the population in 1970 and 12.7 per cent by 2000. In spite of the advance of science and medicine, the nation's death rate in the near future is bound to increase simply because more of our people are approaching that age of three-score and ten at which death cannot be long delayed.

* * *

Birth Rate Falling

We said, "If our present birth rates continue." This is highly doubtful. The birth rate in the United States has been falling steadily since 1900, and the depression did nothing to increase it. For 15 years, with three exceptions, the number of births has been less each year than in the year preceding. In 1932, the depth of the depression, nearly 700,000 fewer children were born than in 1921. Even the talk about increased births among families on relief turns out to have been a false alarm. The best estimates indicate that while more than 3,000,000 children have been born to families on relief, these families had the highest birth rate before they went on relief. Careful studies show their birth rates did not increase; in many areas, the rates even declined.

As for the more able elements in the population, it was felt by some that the depression had accumulated a "backlog" of postponed marriages and births, and that as soon as times improved, the birth rate would mount again. Recent recovery shows this predicition is true for marriages, but the birth rate has shown no disposition to turn upward—in fact, has continued to fall. And, interestingly enough, the depression also piled up a large "backlog" of postponed divorces which recovery has brought into the courts. All statistics now indicate that births will fall more

RUPERT B. VANCE

sharply than was expected. Here is the reason:

Because of the number of unmarried persons and childless couples, it now takes a fraction over three children per family to replenish the population. In view of the trend toward families of one and two children, a great many families with four, five and six children are required to bring up the average. It is the future drop of the six-child families to the two-child level that will bring the average down. This prediction is based partly on the well-known fact that as soon as people improve their conditions of living they begin having fewer children. Accordingly, both recovery and the New Deal's drive for better incomes for the lower third of the population are expected by some to keep "the rich from getting richer and the poor from having children"—at least so many children.

* * *

Effect on the South

The preceding discussion brings us sharply to the question: "What bearing does this have on the problems of the South?" The answer, as everyone knows, is that the South is the only large section of the country whose population is increasing at any appreciable rate. This, by the way, is not due to the South's Negro population, for with their higher death rate, the Negroes are not increasing so fast as the white people. The South is not only increasing its population but is furnishing the increase for the rest of the country. It is the area of the six-child family. The Southern cities, of course, are growing faster than those in any other part of the nation, but they are growing mainly by immigration. What urban industrial center, with their intense competition, their high rents, working mothers and discount on children do, is to attract large numbers of young people in the productive ages of life and partially sterilize them—not biologically but socially—by impelling them to accept the practice of family limitation.

Only two cities with a population of more than 100,000 in the South were reproducing themselves in 1930; Knoxville, Tenn., in the Southern Appalachians area of highest fertility in the nation, and El Paso, Texas, with its large Mexican population.

This leaves the agricultural areas, especially those in the South, as the population seed-bed of the nation. With only 22 per cent of the population, in the period 1930-35 the Southeast was furnishing almost 36 per cent of the nation's population increase.

* * *

Prolific Areas

We need only look at the South to see where the national increase is coming from. With the extension of present rates and no migration there are 113 counties in the United States that would double their population in a generation. Fifty-nine of these counties, more than one-half, are in the Southeast. Next come the wheat growing areas o fthe Northwest, with 34 of these counties. Most fertile of all, however, are the counties of the Southern Appalachians. Evidently the newspaper accounts of child marriages have not led us far astray, for there are five of these isolated counties whose population, barring migration, would increase two and one-half times in 30 years!

These are the facts: It is only when we ask what they mean that we get into difficulties.

It is apparent that without the South, as its seed-bed, the population of the nation would have entered stabilization and decline for the nation only if it migrates from the rural areas of tremendous increase to the urban-industrial areas that are not replacing themselves.

And there is the rub. Immigrants from the rural areas may not be wanted. It is not that the nation wants a declining population. Declining population, it is felt, unless accompanied by a rising standard of living for all the people, will bring a contracting demand for goods. During the depression there was, of course, some feeling that we were overpopulated, but with recovery that feeling is passing. The plain truth of the matter, and we might as well know it, is that the nation doubts not the quantity but the quality of the southern population.

* * *

Regarded As Liability

From the largest families living on the poorest soils these children of tenant farmers, mountain families and small farmers are going out with the least training and education possessed by any group in the United States, to try to break into industry and catch on in the big cities. The head of one great social-science research foundation is quoted as saying that the Southern population is the greatest liability facing the nation today. Ignorant, untrained, and unused to the city, those "briars" and "hillbillies" as they are called, are regarded as the new foreign immigration in Detroit, Akron and points East. Citizens of Flint can point out for you "Little Arkansas," and anywhere the landlords are likely to tell you that "this Southern white labor doesn't know how to take care of the plumbing."

And here are problems. It must normally cost the community and the family well over $2,000 for each child it rears, educates and exports. The South has never proved rich enough to educate its people, and it is not now wealthy enough to rear and educate the labor reserves of the nation.

This situation goes beyond the question of federal equalization funds for the support of education in backwoods states. It comes to an even more serious question: Do we want the poor, the ignorant and the isolated to furnish the population-replacements of the nation, simply because they are poor and ignorant and isolated? We know perfectly well that if the time ever comes when these people are released from their poverty, ignorance and isolation, they will no more double their families every 30 years than do the good denizens of Manhattan. That time is a long way off, and until it comes, no doubt we shall continue to depend on inter-regional migration to hold stable the population of the United States. After that we may well take counsel together.

Population – 1937

Virginia
6

Charlottesville, Va. Progress
August 20, 1937

Colored Residents Said On Decline

Dr. Leland Tate, U. Va. Professor, Makes Study In State

Dr. Leland B. Tate, of the University of Virginia, found today in a study of population trends in Virginia since 1870 that the Shenandoah Valley, Southside Virginia and the middle peninsula of Tidewater had losses in colored population every decade since 1880.

The greatest average loss per decade occurred in the Shenandoah Valley, where, he said, there was a "preponderance of family farms of a general nature that are operated by land-loving farmers of Scotch-Irish descent who have little need for colored laborers and tenants."

The colored population in fact, has decreased or grown slowly in all regions except those characterized by general industrial development, coal mining, resort and recreational centers, organization, trade and service occupations and the more "intensive types" of agriculture, Tate said.

The eastern shore was the only region to show an increase in its rural colored population during the last decade.

The greatest increase by "natural gain" since 1930, he said, is continuing to take place in the southside, northern Neck and eastern shore areas.

His study disclosed a total population growth of from one-tent-h of one per cent in the middle peninsula of Tidewater to over 200 per cent in the extreme southeastern and extreme western regions.

Since 1930, western Virginia was found continuing to lead the east in the percentage of total population growth, with southwestern Virginia, particularly, showing substantial gains.